

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEHRAN 00794 01 OF 02 271317Z

44

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NEAE-00 SAB-01

OMB-01 /050 W

----- 049943

P R 271208Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9957

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER PRIORITY

INFO CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN GER

USIA WASHDC

AFRTS LOS ANGELES CAL

7122D BRS LINDSEY AS GER

OSAF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEHRAN 0794

E.O. 11652: NGDS

TAGS: MIL, IR, US

SUBJ: GOI PROPOSAL FOR JOINT OPERATION OF AFRTS

REFS: (A) CHIEF, ARMISH/MAAG 181032Z DEC 74; (B) CHIEF,

ARMISH/MAAG 151333Z JAN 75

SUMMARY: GOI HAS APPROACHED EMBASSY AND ARMISH/MAAG RE POSSIBLE IRANIAN/U.S. COOPERATION IN MANAGEMENT OF AMERICAN FORCES RADIO AND TELEVISION SERVICE STATION (AFRTS). WE BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL THAT ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING UNDER DIRECTION OF AFRTS BE MAINTAINED AND SUGGEST WE BE AUTHORIZED FLEXIBILITY IN NEGOTIATING POSITIONS TO BE PRESENTED TO GOI. WE PERCEIVE FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL ADVANTAGES TO U.S. IN WORKING OUT COMPROMISE POSITION WITH GOI. WE EMPHASIZE THAT WE HAVE NO WISH TO VIOLATE EITHER LETTER OR SPIRIT OF APPLICABLE DOD REGULATIONS FOR AFRTS. WE WOULD WELCOME WASHINGTON AND EUCOM REACTIONS TO OUR SUGGESTIONS. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 00794 01 OF 02 271317Z

1. AS DESCRIBED REFTELS, MISSION HAS HAD TWO SEPARATE APPROACHES

FROM IRANIAN OFFICIALS ON POSSIBLE JOINT OPERATION OF AFRTS. ON DECEMBER 11, NIRT DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL MAHMOUDI RAISED IDEA OF CO-DIRECTION WITH PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNSELOR. MAHMOUDI MADE IT CLEAR THAT IRANIANS WERE SENSITIVE TO CHARACTERIZATION OF AFRTS AS "OCCUPATION" FORCES STATION AND THAT NIRT WANTED TO ASSUME JOINT CONTROL WITH AFRTS. MAHMOUDI INDICATED THAT NAME OF STATION WOULD HAVE TO BE CHANGED, ELIMINATING ANY IDENTIFICATION OF AFRTS. HOWEVER, HE HOPED THAT PROGRAMMING COULD BE CONTINUED AS PRESENTLY OPERATING WITH AFRTS STAFF. BROADCASTING WOULD BE EXTENDED TO WIDELY SEPARATED PROVINCIAL CENTERS, SUCH AS ISFAHAN AND BANDAR ABBAS, OVER NIRT FACILITIES. SOME ADDITIONAL IRANIAN AND THIRD COUNTRY PROGRAMMING MIGHT BE ADDED, BUT 95 PER CENT OF AFRTS PROGRAMMING WOULD BE RETAINED.

2. IN SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH CHIEF, ARMISH/MAAG, ON JANUARY 11, GENERAL TOUFANIAN, VICE MINISTER OF WAR, SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN DIRECTED ON THE SHAH'S AUTHORITY TO HANDLE AFRTS PROBLEM. HE INDICATED THAT GOI WISHED STATION TO CHANGE ITS TOTALLY AMERICAN CHARACTER, INCLUDING THE NAME, AND TO INTRODUCE FOREIGN LANGUAGE BROADCASTS. LIKE MAHMOUDI, TOUFANIAN WISHED AFRTS TO CONTINUE PROGRAMMING WITH ITS OWN PERSONNEL.

3. WE HAVE SEVERAL OBSERVATIONS AT THIS POINT:

A. BECAUSE THE SHAH HAS DIRECTED THE MOVE TO ALTER OPERATING CONDITIONS OF AFRTS IN TEHRAN, WE MAY BE SURE THAT WE ARE OBLIGED TO RESPOND IN A SUBSTANTIVE WAY. WE CANNOT DRAG OUT THE TALKS AS WE MIGHT IF PROPOSAL WERE SIMPLY BRAIN STORM OF NIRT STAFF. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT KINDS OF CONCESSIONS GOI WILL INSIST ON. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT A SIMPLE CHANGE OF NAME AND INTRODUCTION OF A FEW NON-U.S. PROGRAMS WOULD BE SUFFICIENT FOR GOI'S PURPOSES. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT WE MUST GO BEYOND THAT IF WE ARE TO PRESERVE STATION IN TEHRAN.

B. WITH GENERAL TOUFANIAN TAKING THE LEAD IN NEGOTIATIONS, WE WILL BE DEALING WITH A BASICALLY FRIENDLY AUTHORITY. HOWEVER, HE MAY BE TAKING HIS TECHNICAL DIRECTIONS FROM NIRT AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WHICH COULD COMPLICATE OUR EFFORTS TO REACH A SOLUTION.

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PAGE 03 TEHRAN 00794 01 OF 02 271317Z

C. WE DEEM IT OF HIGH IMPORTANCE THAT AMERICAN RADIO AND TV BROADCASTING BE MAINTAINED IN TEHRAN ALONG PRESENT LINES, PARTICULARLY WITH THE INCREASING NUMBER OF AMERICAN TECHNICIANS BEING ASSIGNED HERE. WE THINK AFRTS MAKES A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE GOOD BEHAVIOR OF OUR COMMUNITY. IN ADDITION, AFRTS, AS A WINDOW ON AMERICAN ENTERTAINMENT AND VALUES, IS HIGHLY REGARDED BY MANY KEY PERSONS IN THE IRANIAN AND RESIDENT FOREIGN COMMUNITIES. FOR THIS REASON, WE THINK GOI WOULD BE EXTREMELY

RELUCTANT TO SEE STATION COLSE.

4. CLEARLY, WISE FLEXIBILITY WILL HAVE TO BE EXERCISED ON OUR SIDE TO SATISFY IRANIAN SENSITIVITIES ON THE ONE HAND AND PRESERVE AFRTS BROADCASTING IN IRAN ON THE OTHER. WE SUGGEST A TWO-STAGE NEGOTIATING APPROACH BE AUTHORIZED ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

A. IN THE FIRST STAGE WE WOULD SUGGEST TO THE GOI ONLY MINIMAL CONCESSIONS. THESE WOULD INCLUDE A CHANGE IN THE STATION NAME TO SOMETHING LIKE QTE INTERNATIONAL RADIO AND TELEVISION SERVICE IN IRAN UNQTE. WE WOULD ALSO AGREE TO ACCEPT SOME FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING FROM SOURCES GOI MIGHT SUGGEST AND WE WOULD FIND ACCEPTABLE. WE WOULD AGREE TO PERIODIC, INFORMAL MEETINGS BETWEEN AFRTS PERSONNEL AND NIRT TO ASSURE THAT THE STATION WAS MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. WE WOULD NOT RPT NOT AGREE TO IRANIAN DIRECTION, EVEN SYMBOLIC, OVER AFRTS PROGRAMMING.

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 00794 02 OF 02 271329Z

44

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEHRAN 0794

B. IF THE FOREGOING TACTIC PROVED INSUFFICIENT, WE WOULD LIKE AUTHORITY FOR A FALL-BACK POSITION WHICH WOULD BE COM-

PRISED OF TWO PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS: (1) NIRT/AFRTS CO-DIRECTION OF THE STATION, AND (2) AFRTS MANAGEMENT OF A PROGRAM PACKAGE LARGELY PREPARED IN THE U.S. AND SOLD OR GIVEN TO THE GOI. UNDER THIS ARRANGEMENT, AFRTS PERSONNEL WOULD HANDLE ALL STATION OPERATIONS, INCLUDING BROADCASTS OF FOREIGN TAPES. THEIR PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY WOULD BE TO ARRANGE FOR TV AND RADIO FILMS AND TAPES FROM THE U.S., PLUS CUSTOMARY LOCALLY-PRODUCED SHOWS. WE WOULD INSIST THAT U.S. PROGRAMMING WOULD HAVE TO BE STRICTLY AND SOLELY UNDER U.S. CONTROL, I.E., FREE FROM IRANIAN CENSORSHIP. WHILE WE WOULD BE WILLING TO LISTEN TO NIRT SUGGESTIONS, FINAL DECISIONS ON PROGRAMMING WOULD BE A U.S. PREROGATIVE. UNDER THIS PROPOSAL, IF NOT GIVEN, AFRTS FILMS, TAPES AND SERVICES WOULD BE SOLD TO THE GOI AS AN FMS CASE OR, IF THAT WERE NOT FEASIBLE, THROUGH ANOTHER CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENT. THIS WOULD PRESERVE PROGRAMMING AS IT IS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED AND MAINTAIN A U.S. INFLUENCE OVER INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING IN TEHRAN.

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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 00794 02 OF 02 271329Z

5. ALTHOUGH WE WOULD PREFER TO CONTINUE AS AFRTS PRESENTLY OPERATES, WE ALSO BELIEVE OUR FALL-BACK POSITION COULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO U.S. INTERESTS. FIRST, PROPOSAL WOULD REDUCE AMERICAN VISIBILITY IN STATION MANAGEMENT, BUT NOT APPRECIABLY DIMINISH BROADCASTING OF U.S. PROGRAMS. SECOND, BROADCASTING WOULD BE EXTENDED AT GOI EXPENSE TO CITIES WHERE AMERICAN TECHNICIANS HAVE EXPERIENCED SEVERE MORALE PROBLEMS OWING TO ABSENCE OF WESTERN ENTERTAINMENT. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH U.S. DEFENSE PERSONNEL AND CONTRACTORS LOCATED OUTSIDE OF TEHRAN, ABSENCE OF AMERICAN RADIO AND TELEVISION IS ALWAYS A PRIMARY COMPLAINT. THIRD, ALLOWING IRANIANS TO FINANCE STATION COULD PRODUCE SAVINGS FOR U.S. AND, ALSO, EFFECT IMPROVEMENTS IN TECHNICAL AND PROGRAM QUALITY OF BROADCASTS.

6. WE REALIZE THERE WILL BE CONCERN BECAUSE OF DOD RULES GOVERNING COPYRIGHT, FOREIGN BROADCASTS AND NEWS PROGRAMS. WHILE WE DO NOT TREAT THESE CONCERNS LIGHTLY, WE THINK THEY CAN BE SATISFIED IF IT IS REALIZED THAT OUR FALL-BACK PROPOSAL WOULD NOT EFFECTIVELY ALTER PRESENT AFRTS CONTROL OVER ITS BROADCAST MATERIAL. IN EFFECT, AFRTS WOULD CONTINUE TO REGULATE ITS PROGRAMMING AND NEWS BROADCASTS ACCORDING TO U.S. RULES AND, AS PRESENTLY, DUE REGARD FOR HOST COUNTRY SENSITIVITIES. AFRTS WOULD, AS A PRACTICAL MATTER, BECOME A TENANT OF THE NIRT STATION, ALLOTTED A PRESCRIBED PORTION OF THE STATION'S TOTAL BROADCAST DAY, I.E., ROUGHLY THE SAME OPERATING TIME PRESENTLY UTILIZED. AFRTS PERSONNEL WOULD HAVE EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION OVER THAT U.S. SEGMENT OF STATION'S OUTPUT. IF NECESSARY FOR COPYRIGHT PURPOSES, U.S. BROADCASTS COULD BE IDENTIFIED WITH SOME PHRASE AS QUOTE PROVIDED BY AFRTS UNQUOTE.

7. IF WE INSIST ON ALL OR NOTHING APPROACH, I.E., CONTINUE  
PRESENT ARRANGEMENT OR LEAVE IRAN, WE WILL SURELY END WITH LATTER  
OPTION. IF WE ARE UNABLE TO DEMONSTRATE FLEXIBILITY AND NEGOTIATE  
A SATISFACTORY COMPROMISE POSITION WITH GOI, WE MAY FIND AFRTS  
TERMINATED IN IRAN AND NIRT ASSUMING, AT SOME FAIRLY EARLY DATE,  
RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL FOREIGN LANGUAGE BROADCASTING. GOI  
COULD HANDLE BROADCASTING WITHOUT GREAT DIFFICULTY. WE ARE SURE  
THAT IRANIANS COULD PURCHASE REQUISITE SERVICES FOR BOTH RADIO  
AND TV FROM PRIVATE AMERICAN SOURCES OR U.K. AND OTHER  
EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS.  
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PAGE 03 TEHRAN 00794 02 OF 02 271329Z

8. WE WOULD APPRECIATE EARLY REACTION TO THE FOREGOING SO  
THAT WE MAY BEGIN SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS TO INCLUDE WASHINGTON AND  
EUCOM REPRESENTATIVES TO ESTABLISH THE USG POSITION TO BE  
USED WITH THE GOI.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** BROADCASTING, MILITARY BASES, NEGOTIATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 27 JAN 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CunninFX  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 ARMISH/MAAG 181032Z, 75 DEC 74  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CunninFX  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 06 AUG 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <06 AUG 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <26 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>  
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**Review Media Identifier:**  
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**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** GOI PROPOSAL FOR JOINT OPERATION OF AFRTS  
**TAGS:** MILI, IR, US  
**To:** STATE USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006